ATS Interest Groups

Neonatal and Developing Lung

Co-Chairs: Peter Vitiello, PhD, MS & Krithika Lingappan, MD, PhD, MS

The goal of the Neonatal and Developing Lung Interest Group is to provide a focal point within the larger meeting for neonatal lung scientists and clinicians.

The group's objectives are as follows:

- Create networking opportunities for basic and clinical scientists in developmental biology, injury and repair, physiology and clinical/translational research
- Present state-of-the-art presentations on important topics in neonatal pulmonology
- Support both clinical and basic research in neonatal lung science

Meet the 2024 Neonatal & Developing Lung Abstract Achievement Awardees

Raquel Arroyo, PhD, PharmD is the Director of Clinical Sciences at Airway Therapeutics. She has been working with SP-D for 10+ years in academia and industry. Raquel has published several papers and presented in international scientific meetings. Her work with Surfactant Protein D (SP-D) started during her PhD in the laboratory of Dr. Perez-Gil (Spain), continued during her postdoc in the laboratory of Dr. Kingma (Cincinnati Children's Hospital, US) and continues within Airway Therapeutics. Airway Therapeutics' objective is to bring SP-D (zelpultide alfa) to commercialization and change the outcome of very early premature babies by preventing bronchopulmonary dysplasia.

Randa Belgacemi, PhD is a postdoctoral fellow at The Lundquist Institute in the joint laboratory of Drs. Al Alam and Danopoulos. Dr. Belgacemi earned her PhD in France in 2020, studying the role of the Hedgehog (HH) pathway in COPD patients, particularly focusing on epithelial repair post-injury. She continues to be interested in the HH pathway, exploring its involvement in human lung development, for which she is currently funded by a CIRM postdoctoral fellowship. Passionate about science and clinical applications, her research bridges bench to bedside, aiming to elucidate cellular and molecular mechanisms in lung development to understand neonatal and pediatric pathologies.

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Benjamin Crawford, MD is a physician-scientist in the division of neonatology at Vanderbilt. Ben attended medical school at the University of Massachusetts. He subsequently attended Pediatrics residency at Mass General Hospital, where he developed an interest in investigating the pathophysiology of developmental lung diseases. Ben attended Neonatology fellowship at Vanderbilt, and, after graduating, he joined Vanderbilt's

Neonatology faculty. His research interests include investigating how inflammation alters the preterm lung and, in particular, better understanding how inflammatory cells interact with developing lung parenchyma. His research is currently supported by the Vanderbilt Department of Pediatrics' K12 award.

Manuel Cantu Gutierrez, PhD discovered his passion for research during his undergraduate studies at the University of Texas-Pan American doing neurodegeneration research using pond snails. During his doctoral studies in the Wythe lab at Baylor College of Medicine, Manuel focused on unraveling the molecular mechanisms governing healthy and pathological angiogenesis using zebrafish and mice models. Currently, in the Lingappan Lab at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, his research explores sex-specific developmental responses to lung injury, particularly in premature infants developing bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD). Manuel aims to uncover insights that could pave the way for targeted BPD treatments.

Past Recipients

2023

- Caroline Cherry, BS
- Laurie Eldredge, MD, PhD
- Krithika Lingappan, MD, PhD, MS
- Kent Willis, MD

2022

- Danielle VanBeckum, MD, MS
- Nara Higano, PhD
- Hongwei Yao, MD, PhD
- Jaco Selle, PhD

2019

- Jed Bassein, BS
- Soumyaroop Bhattacharya, MS, MEd
- Elizabeth Duong, MD
- Linnea Honeker, PhD

ATS Conference Meeting Agendas & Minutes

- [2024 Agenda](#)
- [2018 Minutes](#)
- [2017 Agenda](#)
- [2016 Minutes](#)

Virtual Annual Meetings

- [2022](#)
- [2021](#)